

fighting this here in the United States. The rate of perinatal HIV has decreased steadily from 122 in 2000 to 47 in 2004. Of course, the only acceptable rate of mother-to-child transmission is zero. However, we would do well to achieve a similar 60 percent reduction in all categories of HIV infection.

So today we focus on the HIV epidemic among African Americans. The statistics are staggering, and it highlights the growing impact this epidemic has on African Americans.

In 1985, blacks accounted for 25 percent of AIDS diagnosed, whereas in 2005 they accounted for 50 percent of new diagnoses. This statistic is all the more staggering because in 2005 African Americans only made up 12 percent of the population of this country.

In 2005, 75 out of every 100,000 African Americans had AIDS, compared to only 7.5 out of every 100,000 whites.

Perhaps more disturbing, African American women and children suffer at a rate that is even greater than that of African Americans overall.

Black women accounted for 67 percent of new AIDS cases among women in 2005, compared to 16 percent among white women.

In 2005, young African Americans accounted for only 15 percent of U.S. teens, yet they accounted for 75 percent of new AIDS cases.

In 2002, HIV was the number one cause of death for black women between the ages of 25 and 34, and this is why, Madam Speaker, that I started the first-of-its-kind AIDS Walk for minority women and children and dedicated that to minority women and children. We celebrated 10 years last year because of the staggering statistics that we are still faced with, and we will not stop until we eradicate this dreadful disease. It is ravishing the communities of Latinos, especially Latinas, African American women and both our children.

The devastating effects of this epidemic have not escaped the notice of African American communities, in part due to the success of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Half of the African Americans say the HIV/AIDS is a more urgent problem than it was a few years ago, and indeed, it is. Half of African Americans also believe that the U.S. is losing ground in the fight against this epidemic domestically.

Today is an important day in the effort to increase awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the African American community. However, awareness is not enough. We must work toward solutions to reduce and eventually eradicate not only the racial disparities of HIV/AIDS, but the disease itself. To do so we must increase funding for domestic HIV/AIDS programs, particularly those that target minorities. We must strengthen our efforts to educate the public, particularly young people. We must work harder to encourage HIV testing, and we must also work to care for those who already have contracted this devastating illness.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 547, ADVANCED FUELS INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

Ms. SLAUGHTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-9) on the resolution (H. Res. 133) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 547) to facilitate the development of markets for alternative fuels and Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel through research, development, and demonstration and data collection, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NYPD'S FINEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the NYPD is one of the most recognizable police departments not only in the United States, but the world.

Nearly 38,000 strong, these brave men and women protect and serve the greater New York metropolitan area and its citizens. Being a peace officer in New York City is a dangerous job. It has always been a dangerous job, and New York peace officers risk their lives daily.

The starting salary for a peace officer in New York City is \$25,000, and once they graduate from the academy, it is only \$32,000, almost poverty wages in one of the most expensive cities in the country to live in.

Yet, each year's recruiting classes, young men and women choose to wear the blue uniform and badge of NYPD. They choose to serve New York City and its citizens with honor and bravery.

Madam Speaker, I have had the opportunity as a former judge in Texas to address NYPD peace officers, and after we got through the language barrier, I found them to be dedicated keepers and protectors of the law.

Officer Patrick Lynch, Christine Schmidt and Joseph Cho are three of the valiant PD police officers from New York City. Little did they know that in the early morning hours of February 5, just a few days ago, they would make and become a cut above the rest of us.

It all started with a guy by the name of Danny Fernandez. He was broke, and he was in debt, so he decided how he was going to get some money to pay his debt and pay off other expenses, and he wanted to commit many serious felony crimes ranging from robbery to attempted murder.

So to begin his crime spree, he needed a weapon to commit these robberies. So he decided to attack an NYPD officer to get a firearm. His choice was 30-year-old Officer Joseph Cho, a 2-month rookie assigned to late-night foot patrol on the tough New York streets.

That night, Officer Cho unknowingly became Fernandez's target. Fernandez attacked him and smashed Cho twice over the head with a baseball bat.

Meanwhile, Officer Patrick Lynch, another rookie, who was also out of the academy just 2 months and assigned to the latenight foot patrol, was on patrol. Around 1:00 a.m., Officer Lynch came face-to-face with the menacing Fernandez, armed with a baseball bat, standing over Officer Cho ready to strike him a third time, even though Officer Cho was on the ground.

So seeing Officer Cho on the ground, unconscious, with the bat-wielding outlaw standing over him, Officer Lynch charged after the suspect, and then he radioed for backup. Responding to his calls for assistance was Officer Christine Smith, a 26-year-old, yes, that is right, rookie within NYPD.

She, like Officers Cho and Lynch, had only been out of the academy for 2 months, and she was on foot patrol just a few blocks away. She had given up a career in teaching to become a peace officer.

Together, this dynamic duo quickly caught the outlaw and held him and charged him with serious crimes.

Their bravery and heroism has earned these three rookies commendations from NYPD Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. It has also earned them the respect of their fellow officers and the gratitude of the entire city.

Officer Cho received numerous skull fractures and required 20 stitches, but eventually he will recover. The criminal will be facing a jury in New York City for his crimes against New York City's finest, the NYPD.

Lawmen and women like Officers Lynch, Smith and Cho are a rare breed, but they are the Americans who wear the badge to protect and to serve. So, today, we thank rookies Lynch, Schmid and Cho and the thousands other peace officers in this country for their daily valor, courage and sense of duty to the people. These individuals fight the local thugs, child molesters, robbers, killers and street terrorists. They do our work for us. They are what stands between us, the law and the lawless, and we thank them for that.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1530

THE SURGE AND IRAQI FORCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, you will recall that the hallmark of the

President's so-called surge, the escalation of troops into Iraq, was that Iraqi forces would actually be on the front lines, while American troops would be providing support.

In fact, a White House fact sheet from the day the President announced escalation, says that the primary element of the strategy is to let the Iraqis lead.

Well, the escalation has begun, and not only are they not leading, we are lucky if they even show up. That is right. Reportedly, as many as 50 percent of the Iraqi troops expected and needed for the Baghdad operation aren't reporting to duty. This doesn't bode well, Madam Speaker. American troops will now bear the brunt of what promises to be deadly, violent, urban warfare.

We are now finding out that the escalation will be twice as large as the President has said, requiring 48,000 additional troops, as opposed to 21,000, as originally announced by the President. Now, if Iraqis aren't prepared for the fight, it is easy to imagine still more U.S. soldiers being sent into the grinder. The surge has barely begun, and already, it is failing.

It is clear, furthermore, that the Maliki government is powerless to live up to its promises. Maliki himself owes much of his political authority to one of Iraq's most powerful militia leaders. So how, exactly, is he going to keep Iraqi communities safe from the militias?

On their way out the door, General Abizaid and General Casey warned that increasing force levels just absolves Iraqis of the responsibility for their own security, and they were absolutely right.

In the State of the Union address, the President said, and I quote him, "... it's time for [the Iraqi] government to act. They have promised to deploy more of their own troops to secure Baghdad . . . They pledged that they will confront violent radicals of any faction . . . and they need to follow through."

If they don't, where is the "or else" in the President's words, and where are the consequences if they don't meet these benchmarks and honor these commitments?

Madam Speaker, it is time for fewer carrots and more sticks. Edward Luttwak of the Center for Strategic and International Studies put it succinctly. He said, "it's time for the Iraqis to make their own history." Or, in the words of Luttwak's New York Times op-ed piece yesterday, he said, "To Help Iraq, Let It Fend for Itself."

There is only one solution, a quick military withdrawal from Iraq. I have a bill that was sponsored by 33 other Members of Congress that will do precisely that. H.R. 508, the Bring Our Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Restoration Act will do exactly what we need. It will take our troops out of harm's way and force Iraqis to secure their own country. We won't leave

them high and dry. The bill calls for an international stabilization force, but one that would come only at the request of the Iraqi government for no more than 2 years, and with other nations taking on the burden as well.

H.R. 508 will have our troops home in 6 months, leaving behind no permanent military bases and turning over control of the Iraqi oil to the Iraqi people. We will not abandon Iraq. We will continue to be a partner in the reconciliation and reconstruction, but it is time for us to end the military occupation that has failed so tragically. There are no good answers here, but one thing is for sure: There is nothing more our soldiers can do to bring peace to the streets of Baghdad or any other part of Iraq. If anything, our continued presence is aggravating an already combustible situation, which, in fact, we created. We created this situation with our invasion in the first place. Madam Speaker, it is time for Iraqis to defend Iraq, and it is time for American troops to come home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING TAYLOR SIAS AND KEVIN TEMPLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about two outstanding youths in my district and to highlight, I think, something that we do too rarely here and across America. We talk a lot about our young people in their teens playing video games, not getting involved in their communities, not trying new sports, not enjoying the outdoors.

Today I am very privileged to talk about two such individuals in my district who are breaking the mold and are, I think, achieving at high levels, but they are also doing it by enjoying the great outdoors and also bringing strength to their communities.

First, I would like to recognize Taylor Sias from Weston, West Virginia, for representing our State in the 2007 Bassmaster CastingKids National Semi-Finals Competition in Gadsden, Alabama.

Taylor is a sixth grade student at Robert L. Bland Middle School in Weston and is a three-time State champion. Taylor previously competed in the 2004 semifinals in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and in the 2005 semifinals in Orlando, Florida. The Bassmaster CastingKids challenge is to flip, pitch and cast a hookless lure into a bull's eye target. Sounds kind of hard to me.

BASS developed the Bassmaster CastingKids program in 1991, open to

young people in two age groups, 7-10 and 11-14. The goals of this competition are to involve America's youth in fishing and to foster in each participant an appreciation and a concern for our outdoors. Participants compete in local events conducted by affiliated BASS federation national clubs. Local event winners proceed to their State finals where each State then determines two to represent their State at the national semifinals. From the national semifinals, only 10 contenders advance on to the national championship. Since its inception, over 1.5 million youth have participated in the program, and over \$2 million in cash prizes and scholarships have been awarded.

I would again like to congratulate Taylor and thank him for proudly representing West Virginia at the 2007 Bassmaster CastingKids National Semifinals Championship and wish him the best of luck in becoming an accomplished angler.

Madam Speaker, the other youth I would like to talk about today is Kevin Templan of Charlestown, West Virginia. Kevin became the first member of Boy Scout Troop 82 to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. His commitment to family and community and church played an integral part in this achievement. Kevin worked on a beautification project at Saint Peter's Catholic Cemetery for his Eagle Scout project.

He is recognized by the Boy Scout National Honor Society, Order of the Arrows, for adhering to the traditions and values of scouting. A senior at Jefferson County High School, Kevin is a drummer in the Cougar Marching Band. He attends Saint James Greater Catholic Church where he will soon be a member of the Knights of Columbus. Kevin enjoys reading, origami and spending time with his younger brother and sister.

The Templan family recently moved to my district from Bryan, Texas, and we welcome them. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm West Virginia welcome to Kevin and his family. Jefferson County is fortunate to host such an accomplished young leader. It is a pleasure to serve such devoted young citizens like Kevin in West Virginia's Second District.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ELLISON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KAGEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) is recognized for 5 minutes.